

Government Launches
first National Strategy
for Conservation of the

GREY CROWNED CRANE

Uganda's National Symbol



On 2nd March 2020 in Kabale, western Uganda, NatureUganda's long time advocacy efforts on the conservation of the Grey Crowned Crane were rewarded by the Launch of the National Conservation strategy for the Species.

This was launched by the State Minister for Tourism Hon. Godfrey Kiwanda Ssubi during the Crane Festival celebrated under the theme “Bend the Curve of the Crane population decline” at Kikungiri primary school in Kabale. The celebrations were held during the Wildlife week held as part of the World Wildlife Day celebrations for Uganda. The Grey Crowned Crane is globally threatened with extinction and is the National bird for Uganda.

The function was organised by NatureUganda through its African Crane Conservation Project, which is implemented in partnership with International Crane Foundation and Endangered Wildlife Trust. The event attracted hundreds of participants including national leaders, local district leadership, primary school children, university students, conservationists, civic society leaders, the media fraternity, private sector practitioners and politicians. Surprisingly, cranes which were slated to be the centre of the focus during the celebrations made maiden physical appearances and hovered above the congregation, to the amazement of many participants.

To kick off the celebrations, a radio talk show was held on the eve of the festival during which several aspects of the national plan were discussed.

The next morning on the festival day a brass band march led by teams of crane custodians and students dressed in crane T-shirts and displaying banners publicising the need for the conservation of the Grey Crowned Crane. Guided by the traffic police and led by brass band, the procession marched through Kabale town up to the celebrations venue, Kikungiri primary school.

The Guest of Honor was the Minister of State for Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities and with guidance from Mr. Achilles Byaruhanga; the Executive Director, the function proceeded with a tour of the exhibitions by communities and the schools participating in Crane conservation. There were speeches from invited guests and performances by the Schools and community groups. The event was crowned by the launch of the Grey Crowned Crane Conservation Strategy for Uganda by the Minister, the first of its kind in Uganda. During the launch, the main threats to the species were highlighted as being habitat loss and human interference and the Minister pledged the support of government towards the implementation of the strategy.

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